

REMARKS

Claims 24-31 remain in this application, with original Claims 1-23 canceled. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and review of the application in light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Before addressing the merits of the rejections based on prior art, Applicant provides the following brief description of the invention. The invention is directed to a power regulation system for accessory devices of a model railroad set. As known in the art, a model railroad set would include a model train engine and cars adapted to travel on a track. The model train engine would be powered by a source voltage (either AC or DC) applied to the track by a transformer. The model railroad set may further include accessory devices associated with the model train, such as headlights, sound effects, smoke discharge unit, etc., or associated with the track, such as street lights, building lights, etc. The inclusion of such accessories increases the complexity and realism of the model railroad set and hence the enjoyment by the model railroad enthusiast. These accessories typically draw their electrical power from the source voltage applied to the track.

A drawback with conventional model train sets is that the source voltage is inconsistent and fluctuates due to changing load conditions. For example, turning on accessory devices, such as lights in a portion of the model train layout, increase the load on the source voltage and cause it to dip. Moreover, as the model train traverses the track, the load on the model train engine changes as the train climbs and descends hills or as cars are added or removed from the train. These fluctuations of the source voltage degrade the performance of the accessories, e.g., making the lights dim. The invention solves this problem by providing a voltage regulator that provides a constant voltage to the accessory devices notwithstanding fluctuations in the source voltage. The voltage regulator is programmable by user commands to define a particular voltage level for operating the accessory. This way, each accessory can be operated at their optimum voltage level.

In the interest of advancing the prosecution, Applicant has cancelled the original claims and now presents new Claims 24-31 directed to these and other aspects of the invention. The new claims are considered allowable over the cited prior art.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-3, 5, 9-10, and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Geller et al. The Examiner also rejected Claims 4, 6-8, 11, and 16-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Geller et al. in combination with Westlake and Rau et al. These rejections are now moot in view of the cancellation of these claims. Moreover, Applicant considers the references inapplicable to the claims as now presented.

Geller et al. discloses a voltage regulator that employs a triac to deliver a regulated output voltage to a load. The output voltage is controlled by adjusting a potentiometer 64 and by adapting the reference voltage circuitry to produce a reference voltage of the desired value (see col. 6, lns 56-60). It should be appreciated that these adjustments are performed during the design and manufacture of the voltage regulator, and are unsuitable to being made by a user during operation of the system. Thus, Geller et al. fails to suggest or disclose a power control system for a model train in which the regulated output voltage is "responsive to a user command" as defined in Claim 24.

Westlake discloses an output control station for operating a model electric train. The station produces two variable voltage alternating current (AC) output channels (TRACK 1 and TRACK 2) and two fixed-voltage AC output channels (AUX 1 and AUX 2). The variable output channels are responsive to operator controlled throttles, and are used to control the speed of the model train engine. The fixed-voltage channels are used to power the train accessories (see col. 4, lns. 33-34). The voltages of these fixed-voltage channels is set by the circuitry, and are not controlled by the user. Westlake therefore has the same deficiency as Geller et al.

Rau et al. discloses a voltage regulator that will track normal power line conditions and determine a minimum clamping voltage to protect the regulated load.

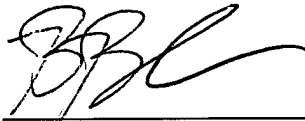
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Rau et al. is cited primarily for its disclosure of a protection circuit. The reference otherwise fails to make up for the deficiencies of Geller et al. and Westlake.

In view of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 24-31 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested, and a timely Notice of Allowability is solicited. If it would be helpful to placing this application in condition for allowance, the Applicant encourages the Examiner to contact the undersigned counsel and conduct a telephonic interview.

To the extent necessary, Applicant petitions the Commissioner for a two-month extension of time, extending to February 12, 2006, the period for response to the Office Action dated September 12, 2005. The Commissioner is authorized to charge \$225.00 for the two-month extension fee in accordance with Rule 1.17(a)(2) and any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-0639.

Respectfully submitted,



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